

The Value of Connections

If you have looked at the cover of this issue, you may be wondering why we chose a picture of an engineer repairing telephone wires. The link to stem cells might not be immediately apparent. However, if you look closely, you will see that there is an underlying theme. The telephone wires represent communication, and the drawing incorporates various elements of the interconnected network of ethical and practical considerations involved in regenerative medicine, some of which are highlighted in our issue (see if you can guess the artist whose work we are subtly emulating!). The engineer has a role to play too—as a depiction of the stem cell-based approaches that are tapping into that network to help make progress toward repair and regeneration.

The underlying prompt for the cover theme came from this month's review section, which looks at the importance of communication at different stages of the research enterprise. In their Forum, Erica Haimes and Ken Taylor advocate for strong connections between researchers, clinicians, and patients to help ensure smooth and effective provision of materials for scientific research. Once materials are available, discussion and exchange of reagents is more straightforward if information about them is presented clearly. To that end, the two Letters both comment and build upon a Forum that appeared in our April issue calling for a standardized approach to nomenclature for human pluripotent stem cell lines (Luong et al., 2011). The Perspective from Christopher Goldring and colleagues arose from communication, as it is based on discussions between authors from a broad range of academic institutions and companies at a workshop. This article outlines the many different factors that need to be taken into account for assessing the safety of any stem cell-based therapy, regardless of the cell type and source being used. Richard Maziarz and Dawn Driscoll look at the other end of the process by outlining the need for early interaction between those developing treatments and the health care organizations that will ultimately be asked to pay for them. Last but not least, we also focus on the importance of communication with the general public, through patient advocate Brooke Ellison, who gives us an overview of a new book, "Stem Cell Hope" by TIME Magazine reporter Alice Park; and through outgoing ISSCR President Elaine Fuchs, who in her President's Note emphasizes the importance of active engagement with lay audiences to promote understanding and appreciation of stem cell research.

In the context of a journal, the concept of communication is always relevant—it is our *raison d'être*. We are therefore happy to be "communicating" a strong selection of new research findings in this issue, ranging from regulation of lung stem cells to suppression of aberrant transcripts in ESCs. Some papers were available online ahead of the issue date; others are newly available now. As always, you can find a summary of these studies and how they relate to each other on our Editors' Notes page. Last month, we partnered with our sister journal *Neuron* to bring you a focus on neural stem cells. This focus had two parts, the first being a collection of review articles and primary research

papers in our May issue. Then, later in the month, *Neuron* published a special review feature covering a variety of different topics related to neural stem cells and adult neurogenesis. This month, *Cell* will also be publishing a collection of stem cell-related review articles. As I discussed last year (Sweet, 2010), *Cell Stem Cell* aims to follow the progress of the stem cell field toward clinical translation, and the most recent addition to our article type repertoire, "Clinical Progress," fosters communication in that realm by presenting high-quality work that bridges the divide between basic research and clinical application. In this regard, we were pleased to see that last month Thomson Reuters highlighted *Cell Stem Cell* as a Rising Star in the field of Clinical Medicine, based on its citation record. Later this year, we hope to promote interaction in a different way, by co-hosting a Cell Symposium on Stem Cell Programming and Reprogramming in Lisbon, Portugal, from December 8th to 10th. You can find information about the confirmed speakers and how to register to attend online at <http://bit.ly/i9UZBs>. Alternatively, if you prefer your missives about stem cell research in a more succinct form, you may want join our growing band of followers on Twitter (@CellStemCell).

As I write this Editorial, we are making preparations for the ISSCR 2011 Annual Meeting. At the meeting itself, we are delighted to be partnering with the University Health Network – Toronto and the ISSCR to bring you a free half-day symposium to honor the scientific legacy of Ernest McCulloch (see Iscove, 2011). All registered attendees for the ISSCR meeting are welcome to join us for this Focus Session, which will take place from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 15th. You can find more information about it and register your interest on the premeeting events page of the ISSCR website. Cell Press will have an exhibition booth at the meeting (#811), and we invite you to visit us to learn more about our various initiatives, including the special issues mentioned above, to meet Scientific Editors from *Cell* and *Cell Stem Cell*, and to enter to win an iPad 2 by connecting with us on Facebook. At the booth, we will also announce the results of our website-based "Best Paper" contest, so you can find out which of the six finalists was the most popular among our voters. In addition, you will be able to learn about an exciting new Cell Press tool designed to take authors "behind the scenes" in the publication process. When you pick up your delegate bag, you will see that it contains a copy of this issue of *Cell Stem Cell* (perhaps that is even where you found this Editorial). We are very grateful to Stemgent for providing the sponsorship that made it possible for us to distribute these journal copies. Stemgent focuses on developing cutting-edge products for the stem cell community, including a new mRNA-based reprogramming protocol based on a paper that *Cell Stem Cell* published last year (Warren et al., 2010).

In closing, I'd like to offer congratulations in advance to Robert Blelloch for receiving the ISSCR Outstanding Young Investigator Award this year, and to the winners of two new awards: Kazutoshi Takahashi and Shinya Yamanaka, receiving the McEwen Centre Award for Innovation, and Robert Klein, receiving the

Public Service Award. As always, I look forward to communicating with as many of you as possible during the course of the ISSCR meeting, and of course to hearing about all of the latest and best research. See you there!

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